

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (Currently Amended) A platform for use in sample analysis comprising
2 an optically transparent substrate having a refractive index (n_1), a thin, optically transparent
3 layer, formed on one surface of the substrate, said layer having a refractive index (n_2) which is
4 greater than (n_1), said platform incorporating therein one or multiple corrugated structures, each
5 comprising substantially parallel periodic grooves which define one or multiple sensing ~~areas or~~
6 regions, ~~each for one or multiple capture elements, said grooves being so profiled, dimensioned~~
7 and oriented configured such that either

8 a) — ~~coherent light incident on said platform is diffracted into individual beams~~
9 ~~or diffraction orders which interfere resulting in reduction of the transmitted beam and an~~
10 ~~abnormal high reflection of the incident light thereby generating an enhanced evanescent field at~~
11 ~~the surface of the one or multiple sensing areas; or~~

12 b) — coherent and linearly polarized light incident on said platform is diffracted
13 into individual beams or diffraction orders which interfere resulting in ~~almost~~ a substantially
14 total extinction of the transmitted beam and an abnormal high reflection of the incident light
15 thereby generating an enhanced evanescent field at the surface of the one or multiple sensing
16 regions; areas.

17 wherein the enhanced evanescent field interacts with luminescent material on or
18 in the vicinity of one or more of the sensing regions so as to produce a luminescent signal.

1 2. (Currently Amended) The platform of claim 1, ~~A platform comprising an~~
2 ~~optically transparent substrate having a refractive index (n_1), a thin, optically transparent layer,~~
3 ~~formed on one surface of the substrate, said layer having a refractive index (n_2) which is greater~~
4 ~~than (n_1), said platform incorporating in the transparent layer a corrugated structure substantially~~
5 ~~over the entire platform, or multiple separate corrugated structures arranged on the platform, said~~
6 ~~structures comprising substantially parallel periodic grooves which are mono or multi-~~

~~diffractional which grooves represent one or multiple sensing areas or regions~~, wherein for each
corrugated structure:

(a) the depth of the grooves is in the range of 3 nm to the thickness of the
optically transparent layer,

(b) the thickness of the optically transparent layer is in the range of 30 to 1000
nm,

(c) the period of the corrugated structure is in the range of 200 to 1000 nm,

(d) the ratio of groove depth to the thickness of the optically transparent layer is in
the range of 0.02 to 1, and

(e) the ratio of groove width to the period of the grooves is in the range of 0.2 to
0.8.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) A platform according to claim 1 wherein the substrate of the
platform is formed from inorganic material.

5. (Original) A platform according to claim 1, wherein the substrate is
formed from organic material.

6. (Original) A platform according to claim 1, wherein the optically
transparent layer is formed from inorganic material.

7. (Original) A platform according to claim 1, wherein the optically
transparent layer is formed from organic material.

8-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A platform according to claim 1, wherein the
surface of the optically transparent layer includes one or a plurality of sensing regions, ~~areas, the~~
~~or each of which carries one or plurality of capture elements.~~

1 11. (Currently Amended) A platform according to claim 10, wherein each
2 capture element contains ~~individual and/or mixtures of~~ one or more capture molecules which are
3 capable of affinity reactions.

1 12. (Original) A platform according to claim 10, including an adhesion
2 promoting layer disposed at the surface of the optically transparent layer in order to enable
3 immobilisation of capture molecules.

1 13. (Currently Amended) A platform according to claim 1, wherein the
2 platform is formed with a plurality of sensing ~~areas or~~ regions, each having its own diffractive
3 grooves or multiple, superimposed grooves suitable for multicolor excitation and detection of
4 samples.

1 14. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for analysing samples comprising a
2 platform ~~according to claim 1~~, including an optically transparent substrate having a refractive
3 index (n_1), a thin, optically transparent layer, formed on one surface of the substrate, said layer
4 having a refractive index (n_2) which is greater than (n_1), said platform incorporating therein one
5 or multiple corrugated structures comprising periodic grooves which define one or multiple
6 sensing regions, said grooves being configured such that either
7 a) coherent light incident on said platform is diffracted into individual beams
8 or diffraction orders which interfere resulting in reduction of the transmitted beam and an
9 abnormal high reflection of the incident light thereby generating an enhanced evanescent field at
10 the surface of the one or multiple sensing regions; or
11 b) coherent and linearly polarized light incident on said platform is diffracted
12 into individual beams or diffraction orders which interfere resulting in almost total extinction of
13 the transmitted beam and an abnormal high reflection of the incident light thereby generating an
14 enhanced evanescent field at the surface of the one or multiple sensing regions,
15 wherein the enhanced evanescent field interacts with luminescent material on or
16 in the vicinity of one or more of the sensing regions so as to produce a detectable luminescent
17 signal;

18 said apparatus further including wherein means for generating a light beam and
19 for directing the beam so that it is incident upon the platform on the side of the substrate that
20 does not have the optically transparent layer disposed thereon at an angle which causes
21 evanescent resonance to occur in at least one sensing region of the platform to thereby create an
22 enhanced resonant field in the at least one sensing area region of the platform, and means for
23 detecting a characteristic of an affinity reaction occurring on or in the vicinity of, or a
24 characteristic of a material disposed on or in the vicinity ~~[[of]]~~ of, the at least one sensing area
25 region of the platform.

1 15. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the light generating
2 means comprises a laser for emitting a coherent laser beam.

1 16. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the
2 means for directing the beam includes including optical elements for directing the laser beam so
3 that it is incident on the platform at an angle θ , the angle θ being defined by the expression \sin
4 $\theta = n \cdot \lambda / \Lambda$ where Λ is a period of the diffractive grooves, λ is the wavelength of the light and n is
5 the effective refractive index of the optically transmitting layer.

1 17. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the detecting means
2 is arranged to detect luminescence such as fluorescence, phosphorescence, chemi-luminescence,
3 and electro-luminescence.

1 18. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 14 wherein the light generating
2 means is adapted to generate light having a linear polarisation component which gives rise to TM
3 excitation.

1 19.-28. (Canceled)

1 29. (Original) Apparatus according to claim 15 wherein the light generating
2 means is adapted to generate light having a linear polarisation component which gives rise to TM
3 excitation.

1 30. (New) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the light beam incident
2 upon the platform has a polarization that is substantially perpendicular to the grooves in the at
3 least one sensing region so as to give rise to TM excitation in the at least one sensing region.

1 31. (New) Apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the light beam incident
2 upon the platform has a polarization that is substantially parallel to the grooves in the at least one
3 sensing region so as to give rise to TE excitation in the at least one sensing region.

1 32. (New) Apparatus for analysing samples comprising a platform including
2 an optically transparent substrate having a refractive index (n_1), a thin, optically transparent
3 layer, formed on one surface of the substrate, said layer having a refractive index (n_2) which is
4 greater than (n_1), said platform incorporating therein one or multiple corrugated structures
5 comprising periodic grooves which define one or multiple sensing regions, said grooves being
6 configured such that either

7 a) coherent light incident on said platform is diffracted into individual beams
8 or diffraction orders which interfere resulting in reduction of the transmitted beam and an
9 abnormal high reflection of the incident light thereby generating an enhanced evanescent field at
10 the surface of the one or multiple sensing regions; or

11 b) coherent and linearly polarized light incident on said platform is diffracted
12 into individual beams or diffraction orders which interfere resulting in almost total extinction of
13 the transmitted beam and an abnormal high reflection of the incident light thereby generating an
14 enhanced evanescent field at the surface of the one or multiple sensing regions,

15 wherein the enhanced evanescent field interacts with luminescent material on or
16 in the vicinity of one or more of the sensing regions so as to produce a detectable luminescent
17 signal;

18 said apparatus further including means for generating a light beam and for
19 directing the beam so that it is incident upon the platform on the side of the substrate having the
20 optically transparent layer disposed thereon at an angle which causes evanescent resonance to
21 occur in at least one sensing region of the platform to thereby create an enhanced resonant field
22 in the at least one sensing region of the platform, and means for detecting a characteristic of an

23 affinity reaction occurring on or in the vicinity of, or a characteristic of a material disposed on or
24 in the vicinity of, the at least one sensing region of the platform.

1 33. (New) Apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the light generating
2 means comprises a laser for emitting a coherent laser beam.

1 34. (New) Apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the means for directing
2 the beam includes optical elements for directing the laser beam so that it is incident on the
3 platform at an angle θ , the angle θ being defined by the expression $\sin \theta = n \cdot \lambda / \Lambda$ where Λ is a
4 period of the diffractive grooves, λ is the wavelength of the light and n is the effective refractive
5 index of the optically transmitting layer.

1 35. (New) Apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the detecting means is
2 arranged to detect luminescence such as fluorescence, phosphorescence, chemi-luminescence,
3 and electro-luminescence.

1 36. (New) Apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the light generating
2 means is adapted to generate light having a linear polarisation component which gives rise to TM
3 excitation.

1 37. (New) Apparatus according to claim 33, wherein the light generating
2 means is adapted to generate light having a linear polarisation component which gives rise to TM
3 excitation.

1 38. (New) Apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the light beam incident
2 upon the platform has a polarization that is substantially perpendicular to the grooves in the at
3 least one sensing region so as to give rise to TM excitation in the at least one sensing region.

1 39. (New) Apparatus according to claim 32, wherein the light beam incident
2 upon the platform has a polarization that is substantially parallel to the grooves in the at least one
3 sensing region so as to give rise to TE excitation in the at least one sensing region.

1 40. (New) The platform of claim 1, wherein the grooves of at least one of said
2 corrugated structures are configured such that the radiation loss coefficient of the incident light
3 within the at least one corrugated structure is on the order of 2000/cm or greater.

1 41. (New) The platform of claim 1, wherein the grooves of at least one of said
2 corrugated structures are configured such that the propagation distance of the incident light
3 within the at least one corrugated structure is less than about 100 μm .

1 42. (New) The platform of claim 1, wherein the grooves of at least one of said
2 corrugated structures are configured such that the propagation distance of the incident light
3 within the at least one corrugated structure is less than about 10 μm .

1 43. (New) The platform according to claim 1, wherein a light beam incident
2 upon the platform having a polarization that is substantially perpendicular to the grooves in at
3 least one sensing region gives rise to TM excitation in the at least one sensing region.

1 44. (New) The platform according to claim 1, wherein a light beam incident
2 upon the platform having a polarization that is substantially parallel to the grooves in at least one
3 sensing region gives rise to TE excitation in the at least one sensing region.

1 45. (New) The platform of claim 1, wherein the luminescent signal is one of a
2 fluorescent signal, a phosphorescent signal, a chemi-luminescent signal and an electro-
3 luminescent signal.

1 46. (New) The platform of claim 1, wherein the luminescent material includes
2 one of a fluorescent material, a phosphorescent material, and two or more materials which
3 interact to produce a luminescent signal.